

What is claimed is:

1 1. An instant messaging or chat (IM/chat) communication method comprising the  
2 steps of:  
3 inserting in an instant message (IM) a voice conference identifier comprising a  
4 voice conference call list identifying conference call nodes;  
5 transmitting said IM to a recipient at a recipient node, wherein responsive to said  
6 recipient selecting said voice conference identifier, a voice conference call between  
7 selected ones of said identified conference call nodes is established.

1 2. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, wherein said conference call is  
2 established using Voice over IP (VoIP) based voice communications links.

1 3. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, wherein said conference call is  
2 established using telephony-based voice communications links over a public switched  
3 telephone network (PSTN).

1 4. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, wherein said voice conference  
2 call list specifies telephone numbers for said identified conference call nodes.

1 5. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, wherein said voice conference  
2 call list specifies IP addresses for said identified conference call nodes.

1 6. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:  
3 inserting in said IM/chat message a selectable symbol for initiating said voice  
4 conference call with said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes.

1 7. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:

3 inserting in said IM/chat message a plurality of selectable symbols, each said  
4 symbol for initiating a voice communications link with a selected one of said identified  
5 conference call nodes.

1 8. The IM/chat communication method of claim 1, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:

3 embedding computer program code in said IM/chat message, wherein said  
4 computer program code is configured to establish a plurality of voice communications  
5 links between said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes thereby  
6 establishing said conference call.

1 9. An instant messaging or chat (IM/chat) communication method comprising the  
2 steps of:

3 detecting a voice conference identifier comprising a voice conference call list  
4 identifying conference call nodes in an IM/chat message received by a recipient at a  
5 recipient node;

6 responsive to detecting said voice conference identifier, displaying at least one  
7 selectable icon; and

8 responsive to a selection of said at least one selectable icon, establishing a voice  
9 conference call between selected ones of said identified conference call nodes.

1 10. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said displaying step  
2 displays a single icon and said establishing step establishes said voice conference call  
3 between said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes responsive to said  
4 selection of said single icon.

1 11. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said displaying step  
2 displays a plurality of icons, each said icon corresponding to one of said voice  
3 conference call nodes, and wherein said establishing step establishes a voice  
4 communications link with said selected ones of said conference call nodes responsive  
5 to said selection of corresponding ones of said plurality of icons.

1 12. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, said establishing step further  
2 comprising:

3 extracting from said IM embedded computer program code configured to  
4 establish said voice conference call between said selected ones of said identified  
5 conference call nodes; and

6 responsive to said selection of said at least one icon, executing said embedded  
7 computer program code in order to establish said voice conference call.

1 13. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said voice conference  
2 call list includes telephone numbers for said identified conference call nodes.

1 14. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said voice conference  
2 call list includes IP addresses for said identified conference call nodes.

1 15. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said voice conference  
2 call is established using Voice over IP (VoIP) based voice communications links.

1 16. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, wherein said voice conference  
2 call is established using telephony-based voice communications links over a public  
3 switched telephone network (PSTN).

1 17. The IM/chat communication method of claim 9, said establishing step further  
2 comprising:

responsive to said selection of said at least one icon, determining a telephone number or an IP address for said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes based on said voice conference call list.

18. An instant message comprising:

header information, said header information identifying a sending node and a recipient node;

a message portion, said message portion displaying content from said sending node to said recipient node; and

a voice conference identifier comprising a voice conference call list specifying conference call nodes to be connected via a voice conference call, wherein said recipient node is a conference call node.

19. The instant message of claim 18, further comprising:

embedded computer program code, wherein said computer program code is configured to establish a plurality of voice communications links between selected ones of said specified conference call nodes thereby establishing said conference call.

20. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

inserting in an instant message (IM) a voice conference identifier comprising a voice conference call list identifying conference call nodes;

transmitting said IM to a recipient at a recipient node, wherein responsive to said recipient selecting said voice conference identifier, a voice conference call between selected ones of said identified conference call nodes is established.

21. The machine readable storage of claim 20, wherein said conference call is established using a Voice over IP (VoIP) based voice communications links.

1 22. The machine readable storage of claim 20, wherein said conference call is  
2 established using telephony-based voice communications links over a public switched  
3 telephone network (PSTN).

1 23. The machine readable storage of claim 20, wherein said voice conference call  
2 list specifies telephone numbers for said identified conference call nodes.

1 24. The machine readable storage of claim 20, wherein said voice conference call  
2 list specifies IP addresses for said identified conference call nodes.

1 25. The machine readable storage of claim 20, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:  
3 inserting in said IM a selectable symbol for initiating said voice conference call  
4 with said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes.

1 26. The machine readable storage of claim 20, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:  
3 inserting in said IM a plurality of selectable symbols, each said symbol for  
4 initiating a voice communications link with said selected ones of said identified  
5 conference call nodes.

1 27. The machine readable storage of claim 20, said inserting step further  
2 comprising:  
3 embedding computer program code in said IM, wherein said computer program  
4 code is configured to establish a plurality of voice communications links between said  
5 selected ones of said identified conference call nodes thereby establishing said  
6 conference call.

1 28. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program having a  
2 plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform  
3 the steps of:

4 detecting a voice conference identifier comprising a voice conference call list  
5 identifying conference call nodes in an instant message (IM) received by a recipient at a  
6 recipient node;

7 responsive to detecting said voice conference identifier, displaying at least one  
8 selectable icon; and

9 responsive to a selection of said at least one selectable icon, establishing a voice  
10 conference call between selected ones of said identified conference call nodes.

1 29. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said displaying step displays  
2 a single icon and said establishing step establishes said voice conference call between  
3 said selected ones of said identified conference call nodes responsive to said selection  
4 of said single icon.

1 30. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said displaying step displays  
2 a plurality of icons, each said icon corresponding to one of said voice conference call  
3 nodes, and wherein said establishing step establishes a voice communications link with  
4 said selected ones of said conference call nodes responsive to said selection of  
5 corresponding ones of said plurality of icons.

1 31. The machine readable storage of claim 28, said establishing step further  
2 comprising:

3 extracting from said IM embedded computer program code configured to  
4 establish said voice conference call between said selected ones of said identified  
5 conference call nodes; and

6 responsive to said selection of said at least one icon, executing said embedded  
7 computer program code in order to establish said voice conference call.

1 32. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said voice conference call  
2 list includes telephone numbers for said identified conference call nodes.

1 33. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said voice conference call  
2 list includes IP addresses for said identified conference call nodes.

1 34. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said voice conference call is  
2 established using Voice over IP (VoIP) based voice communications links.

1 35. The machine readable storage of claim 28, wherein said voice conference call is  
2 established using telephony-based voice communications links over a public switched  
3 telephone network (PSTN).

1 36. The machine readable storage of claim 28, said establishing step further  
2 comprising:

3 responsive to said recipient selecting said at least one icon, determining a  
4 telephone number or an IP address for said selected ones of said identified conference  
5 call nodes based on said voice conference call list.

1 37. An instant messaging or chat session client comprising:  
2 a conventional IM processor, said conventional IM processor extracting and  
3 displaying message text encapsulated in a received IM; and,  
4 a voice conference processor, said voice conference processor identifying a  
5 voice conference identifier encapsulated in said received IM, displaying at least one  
6 selectable icon in response to detecting said voice conference identifier, and  
7 responsive to a selection of said at least one selectable icon, establishing a voice  
8 conference call between selected conference call nodes specified by said voice  
9 conference identifier.

20000906T043800T